

New Jersey Department of Health
Communicable Disease Service
Sample Exposure Notification - Chickenpox

Please consult with the LHD and/or NJDOH prior to distribution.
Microsoft® Word version available upon request.

[School/company letterhead]

Dear [parent/guardian/staff]:

We are writing to inform you that a person at [school/company name] has been diagnosed with **chickenpox (varicella)**. As a result, [you/your child] **may have been exposed**. Public health officials and [school/company] are working together to help keep the community safe. Please read the information below.

What Is Chickenpox?

Chickenpox is a very contagious illness caused by a virus. Symptoms usually include fever or cold-like symptoms and an itchy rash with small blisters that can appear all over the body. Most healthy people recover without problems, but complications can occur. People who have been vaccinated can still get chickenpox, but their illness is usually milder and shorter.

What Should I Do?

The New Jersey Department of Health recommends talking with a health care provider about the possible exposure. The chickenpox vaccine can help prevent illness or make symptoms milder **if given within five (5) days after exposure**. Vaccination may be recommended if [you/your child] [has/have]:

- never had chickenpox
- never been vaccinated
- received only one dose of vaccine

Regardless of previous vaccination, please **monitor [your child] for symptoms for 21 days after exposure (through [date])**. If chickenpox develops, [you/your child] should stay home from [school/work] and activities but may return to normal activities once all blisters have crusted over (usually about 5–7 days).

If additional cases occur at [name of facility], people who have not had chickenpox or been vaccinated may need to stay home for up to 21 days under public health guidelines.

How to Help Prevent the Spread

The best way to prevent chickenpox is through vaccination. Two doses of varicella vaccine are recommended for children 12 months and older.

You can also help prevent illness by washing hands often, covering coughs and sneezes, staying home when sick, and not sharing cups, utensils, or water bottles.

More information about chickenpox:

- nj.gov/health/cd/topics/varicella.shtml
- vaccineinformation.org/diseases/chickenpox

If you have questions, please contact [Health Department Name/School/Facility] at [phone number].

Sincerely,
[Health Officer / School Administrator / Nurse]